/13 cont./

346 These minarets have been finished since 1956, and one can climb to their summits, from where one discovers the panorama of Touba and the surrounding plain.

346 From the mosque there is direct access to the tomb of 798 Amadou Bamba, which is in a mausoleum built into the north-east corner of the building beside the great prayer room. The tomb proper (covered by velvet hangings embroidered with Koranic sayings stitched into arabesques) is in the middle of the mausoleum; it is surrounded by wrought-iron grillwork which keeps visitors at a distance, while at the same time allowing many of them to contemplate the saint's tomb. The ground all around the tomb is covered with fine, sifted sand, replaced continually to keep it clean.

The tomb of the first caliph, Amadou Moustapha, is located outside the mosque on the east façade several meters from the wall. The mausoleum resembles a little bungalow; one enters it directly from the outside, without going through the mosque. Here, too, the tomb is hidden behind embroidered hangings.

[782] These places are redolent of an atmosphere of contemplation. The air is heavy with the perfume of the incense burned constantly before the tombs.

*795 796 At Touba, the great Moslem religious celebrations are particularly prominent. Thus the faithful come from quite far away (when they can) in order to celebrate at Touba rather than elsewhere the Corytée, the Tabaski, or the Gamou (1).

1. These three celebrations correspond respectively to the Aid el Fitr, the Aid el Kebir, and the Mouloud of Islamic tradition.

[788] But the great celebration of Touba, the specifically Murid solemnity /14/ which every good talibé tries to attend every year if possible, is the Magal.

/17 cont./

788 age, of Massamba and M'Bara M'Backé, half brothers /on the
*795 father's side/ of the same Sérigne. They will go also to the
778 graves of the first marabouts of the brotherhood and of the first disciples of the Master, Ali Touré, Ibrahima Sarr, Assana N'Diaye, and they will stop longer at that of the beloved disciple, Ibra Fall, at the entrance of which is planted the hir, the historic stake with which was marked the site of the tomb of Amadou Bamba after the miraculous vision which we mentioned above.

There, too, in front of each grave, talibé-cashiers do not stop soliciting the generosity of the pilgrims.

788 When these ritual visits are over, the talibé is purified and
*795 sanctified. If he has any time left, it is possible for him to go back to the city and mingle with the crowd of pilgrims. He can also collaborate in the construction of the mosque by breaking pieces of laterite (huge piles of which are to be found near th[illegible]osque and are used in the making of the concrete) ... unle[illegible]e lingers to watch some fanatic of the Murid branch of [785] the M'Baye Fall devote himself to flagellation exercises ... with a millet pestle.

At sundown he will participate with all the pilgrims in the [illegible]alam du Maghreb (evening prayer); this is the only moment in [782] the day when the 200,000 pilgrims assemble in front of the mosque for a common prayer.

The last day of the pilgrimage is thus the "Official Day." It is called this because the Caliph invites to it all the personalities and all the authorities of the circle of Diourbel, of Senegal, of the Government-general, of the official as well as of the private milieus. All accept this invitation, and those who cannot attend send representatives.

This day essentially requires an official ceremony which takes place in the middle of the morning. The Caliph, escorted /18/ by his most notable guests and followed by the crowd of the others, makes his way to a platform sheltered by canopies and erected in the plaza of the mosque, on which everyone

[9 cont.]

787 805 Time: Certain hours are favorable for the birth of dreams -- especially those when silence is deepest, that is to say, from midnight to early morning and the hour of the siesta (when it is customary to have one).

Among all the months of the year, the month of Nisân (April) is the most propitious, according to a universal belief.

787 788 Texts to quote: In order to evoke a favorable dream, it is recommended that, before lying down, one quote verses from the Koran, which differ greatly according to the method used; [779] those of the first holy book, the Fâtiha, are most preferred for this practice. The Souratou el Ikhâssi ("qhoul houe Allahou ahadoun" = There is only one God) is most frequently used, and one must say it seven times.

There are others (for example, "Astâgh firou Allah!" = May God forgive me!) which one must say 100 times.

[776] The nine names of God (El Djabar = The Almighty, El Moukatabir = The Proud One, El Amad = The Eternal One, El Bâtin = The Hidden One, El Kâdir = The Mighty One, El Madjîd = The Illustrious One, El Bourkhân = The Miracle, El Mouktadir = The One for Whom Anything Is Possible, El Rahman = The Merciful) must be repeated 21 times before sleeping.

Various practices: In order to promote favorable dreams, as well as to drive away bad dreams, one observes various rules which differ only in details.

[783] Thus, to execute the practice of listikhâra, one must make his ablutions (following a rigorously prescribed order) and then [782] his evening prayer. During each rakaa (1), one must say eleven

1. Phase of the prayer which involves: 1 standing position; 1 bowing position, the hands on the knees; 2 prostrate positions, the forehead against the ground; 1 seated position.

times (or more, according to the method followed) the verses of Fâtiha and other quotations from the Koran.

[9 cont.]

787 After having recited the required prayers, one expresses his particular desire in a whisper while shielding the mouth with the right hand.

Then one lies down in a quiet and suitable place, on the right side, placing the right hand under the ear.

787 278 [791] Drugs and substances: Many drugs are provided for facilitating dreaming, sometimes by the mou'abbirs (who are relatively very rare in Senegal) and sometimes by other experienced persons.

The use of the roots of bakis or of sindiègne (a kind of creeping plant common in the western part of Senegal) is very widespread; if one falls asleep with a toothpick of bakis or sindiègne in his mouth, he will have frightful visions in which demons, the dead, and supernatural beings appear.

The same result is obtained if, before lying down, one takes a solution of salted water in which roots of sindiègne have fermented for quite a long time, the effect of which is both purgative and stimulative.

[302] Among other substances, the extract called kaoulâne (sometimes used in the form of a lotion for the face), liquid myrrh, opium, etc. should be mentioned.

787 [782] More rarely, fumigation is practiced in a sealed and isolated hut, in which honey or incense is burned. Obviously, in this case, the procedure may be completed by one of the above practices.

[778] [789] Magical means: Throughout Senegal (as is well-known) one finds an enormous number of talismans (for example, the khâtim, magical designs made up of names, characters, and figures which possess a kind of supernatural power), the aim of which is to evoke favorable dreams; their form varies according to the desire that the believer wants to realize.

Bohumil Holas

(Ifan, Dakar)